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## Primordia

### In the Northwest

#### I.

All over Minnesota,  
 Cerise sopranos,  
 Walking in the snow,  
 Answer, humming,  
 The male voice of the wind in the dry leaves  
 Of the lake-hollows.  
 For one,  
 The syllables of the gulls and of the crows  
 And of the blue-bird  
 Meet in the name  
 Of Jalmar Lillygreen.  
 There is his motion  
 In the flowing of black water.

#### 2.

The child's hair is of the color of the hay in the haystack, around  
 which the four black horses stand.  
 There is the same color in the bellies of frogs, in clays, withered  
 reeds, skins, wood, sunlight.

#### 3.

The blunt ice flows down the Mississippi,  
 At night.  
 In the morning, the clear river  
 Is full of reflections,  
 Beautiful alliterations of shadows and of things shadowed.

## 4.

The horses gnaw the bark from the trees.  
 The horses are hollow,  
 The trunks of the trees are hollow.  
 Why do the horses have eyes and ears?  
 The trees do not.  
 Why can the horses move about on the ground?  
 The trees cannot.  
 The horses weary themselves hunting for green grass.  
 The trees stand still,  
 The trees drink.  
 The water runs away from the horses.  
 La, la, la, la, la, la, la,  
 Dee, dum, diddle, dee, dee, diddle, dee, da.

## 5.

The birch trees draw up whiteness from the ground.  
 In the swamps, bushes draw up dark red,  
 Or yellow.  
 O, boatman,  
 What are you drawing from the rain-pointed water?  
 O, boatman,  
 What are you drawing from the rain-pointed water?  
 Are you two boatmen  
 Different from each other?

In the South.

## 6.

Unctuous furrows,  
 The ploughman portrays in you  
 The spring about him:  
 Compilation of the effects  
 Of magenta blooming in the Judas-tree  
 And of purple blooming in the eucalyptus—  
 Map of yesterday's earth  
 And of to-morrow's heaven.

7.

The lilacs wither in the Carolinas.  
Already the butterflies flutter above the cabins.  
Already the new-born children interpret love  
In the voices of mothers.  
Timeless mother,  
How is it that your aspic nipples  
For once vent honey?

*The pine-tree sweetens my body.  
The white iris beautifies me.*

8.

The black mother of eleven children  
Hangs her quilt under the pine-trees.  
There is a connection between the colors,  
The shapes of the patches,  
And the eleven children . . .  
Frail princes of distant Monaco,  
That paragon of a parasol  
Discloses  
At least one baby in you.

9.

The trade-wind jingles the rings in the nets around the racks by the  
[docks on Indian River.  
It is the same jingle of the water among the roots under the banks of  
[the palmettoes,  
It is the same jingle of the red-bird breasting the orange-trees out of  
[the cedars.  
Yet there is no spring in Florida, neither in boskage perdu, nor on  
[the nunnery beaches.

## To the Roaring Wind.

What syllable are you seeking,  
Vocalissimus,  
In the distances of sleep?  
Speak it.

*Wallace Stevens.*